

ensure that we can meet the intelligence challenges we face in the coming years. We must get this right.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF RAFAEL DIAZ-BALART

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, it is with a great deal of sadness that I rise today to report to our colleagues of the passing of the father of our two very distinguished colleagues, the gentlemen from Florida (Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART) and (Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART).

Rafael Diaz-Balart passed away last Friday after a brief illness of about 3 weeks. And he was one of the most incredible men I ever had the privilege of knowing.

I will say that, as we all know, the Diaz-Balart family has long been great champions of the cause of freedom and democracy in Cuba. And the greatest champion was the father, Rafael Diaz-Balart.

He had a very, very distinguished and varied career. He served as the majority leader in the Cuban House of Representatives, during the time of the Cuban Republic. Later, from exile, he founded the White Rose Party to fight the communist dictatorship.

He served 14 years as a Costa Rican diplomat, and was a legal advisor to the Spanish Government. He always continued to do everything that he possibly could to encourage the cause of democracy and freedom in his homeland.

He is an individual who was extraordinarily dedicated to his family. He had four wonderful sons. And I had the chance to talk to our two colleagues just last Friday shortly after he passed away. And I was struck with some of the things that were said.

As I said, it was a brief illness. And the gentleman from Florida (Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART) told me that his father said to the doctors, whom he had just met, he said, "It was worth getting sick just to have the chance to meet you wonderful guys."

And the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART) said to me that our father taught us how to live, and now he has taught us how to die. And I will say that for me personally it will be a great loss, because I had the opportunity to spend many wonderful times with Rafael Diaz-Balart, and I know that we all, as we think of his passing and the wonderful life that he led, will redouble our efforts to ensure that his dream of freedom and democracy finally come about for the Cuban people.

RECOGNIZING THE SIXTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE END OF WORLD WAR II

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of Janu-

ary 4, 2005, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, on May 8, 2005, we will mark the 60th anniversary of the end of World War II. So I rise today to honor the men and women that did their duty in this war to comfort the families that lost loved ones.

World War II was truly a world war conflict, spread across the globe, and it is estimated that some 50 million people died as a result. The impact of the war was felt everywhere. Men and woman from every walk of life were encouraged to do their bit for the war effort, and they responded magnificently.

It is hard to imagine the relief and joy that those who had lived through the war experienced when at last the war finally ended. Veterans remember ripping the blackout curtains from their windows, turning on their lights, and sharing with their family, friends and neighbors or complete strangers their joy at hearing the news that the war was over.

However, we should remember that for many, the end of the war came over a period of months. For those who were serving in the Far East and their loved ones, the war continued long after the victory celebrations that are etched in our popular memory. World War II extracted a terrible toll, most brutally in terms of the dreadful human cost in dead, injured and of course disabled.

Year after year of sacrifice and uncertainty, of making do and going without, left its mark on each and every Nation. But it also helped forge an attitude of never again.

The images we see of people celebrating the end of the war are people shaking off their recent past and looking forward to a better peaceful future. As we look back on these images, we might stop to reflect upon not only the debt that we owe them, but to consider too the responsibility for the future that we have inherited.

As we look towards the future we look towards democracy. President Bush's trip to Europe, in particular the Soviet Union, exemplified his strong push towards his foreign policy agenda of spreading democracy. As we look towards the future today, President Bush also looked towards the past in remembrance of World War II.

He connected the struggles against Nazi and Communist tyranny in the part of the world to his own campaign to bring democracy to the Middle East. In an effort to encourage President Putin to acknowledge past national mistakes he said, "In regard to our occupation of the Middle East, we will not repeat the mistakes of other generations, appeasing or excusing tyranny, and sacrificing freedom in the vain pursuit of stability. We have learned our lesson. No one's life is expendable. In the long run our security and our true stability depends upon the freedom of others."

It is a remarkable statement that the President issued. It is this freedom, the

freedom and benefits of a democratic Nation that President Bush is trying to encourage people to reflect on. His scheduled stop in Latvia was a way of easing his participation into Monday's anniversary celebration in Moscow's Red Square.

But, of course, a trip like this reopened old wounds between Moscow and the Baltic States, which of course were absorbed into the Soviet Union in 1940 after the secret Molotov-Ribbentrop deal between Hitler and Joseph Stalin in 1939.

The agreement provided for Soviet occupation of Estonia, Latvia, part of Finland and later Lithuania in return for Nazi Germany's control over most of Poland. As President Bush looked back on the history of the Soviet Union, he tried to compare the United States' past mistakes to that of the Soviet Union.

President Bush noted that lengthy and difficult journey for us here in the United States for democracy, with our own civil war that we struggled through. As we look to the future, it is essential to remember the past and the mistakes we made as a Nation, and other Nations should do the same.

World War II embodies what certain mistakes can result in. Sixty years ago, millions of Europeans were suffering from homelessness or having been released from captivity or expelled as part of an act of vengeance.

So thousands of Americans and American families were left with a gaping hole, as they had lost loved ones in the battles during World War II. It is today that we make a stand and seek to liberalize other nations and encourage freedom and democracy throughout the world.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to praise President Bush for his statements that were made in Europe this week and again honor the lives of millions of soldiers that fought for the end of the war, World War II.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KUHLMAN of New York). Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 47 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 2 p.m.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. KOLBE) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer:

Eternal Father of our freedom and our salvation, hear the prayers of Your people across this Nation. With them we pray as one for the Members of Congress who gather today to attend the

work of the people You lay upon their shoulders.

Fill them with wisdom and prudence that all their efforts on behalf of the needy and the forsaken may bring them satisfaction in their labors. And enkindle renewed hope for those who are in most need of Your mercy.

Make of them true leaders who live beyond self-interest and serve their brothers and sisters in this land of promise. To You, our God and Father, we commend this Nation, and we ultimately place all our trust in You, now and forever. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mr. Monahan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 148. An Act to establish a United States Boxing Commission to administer the Act, and for other purposes.

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES SCORING VICTORIES ON EVERY FRONT

(Mr. DELAY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, ever since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, punctured both our national security and our national economy, the House has responded on both fronts. We have worked tirelessly to both secure our homeland and defeat our terrorist enemies around the world, and we have worked with equal determination to secure our economy, helping it to grow and create jobs over the last 3½ years.

These two missions, economic prosperity and military victory, are so intertwined that it could be said that winning the war on terror is America's top economic priority, while growing our economy is a wartime necessity. Both prongs of our agenda are succeeding, Mr. Speaker.

Last week, the Department of Labor reported that 274,000 jobs were created in April, far more than economists predicted, while unemployment came in at just 5.2 percent. Meanwhile, the Congressional Budget Office reported that the deficit projection for the first 7 months of the fiscal year is \$50 billion lower than previously estimated. The deficit is going down. New home sales grew 12.2 percent over last year, and the overall economy grew at 3.1 percent for the first quarter of 2005. The economy is strong, it continues to grow, and that strength and growth make it possible for us to meet the needs of our military and conquer the challenges of the war on terror.

Last week, Mr. Speaker, we built on those successes by passing President Bush's emergency supplemental war budget with strong bipartisan support. And at the same time, offensive operations in the Iraqi and Afghani theaters have netted our troops significant victories over the last week. Dozens of terrorists and insurgents have been captured, and our intelligence gatherers continue to close the noose around our enemies.

Our continued success around the world enhances our security here at home, where this week we will add to that momentum by taking up a bill to reform the way that the Federal Government funds our first responders.

Under the new bill, firefighters, police, and emergency medical personnel will get the money they need via a streamlined funding system. That will help bolster our homeland security and national preparedness, which will further protect our economy, which will, in turn, continue to support our war effort.

All of these priorities are of a kind, Mr. Speaker: homeland security, national security, and economic strength; and this week, the House will score victories on every front.

U.S. NEEDS TO GET OUT OF IRAQ

(Mr. KUCINICH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, the administration is closing defense bases here at home and building new bases in Iraq. There is no money to maintain some defense installations here, but there is \$270 billion and counting for establishing a permanent presence in Iraq. The Armed Forces ranks are depleted. Enlistment is falling off. So the administration is hard at work privatizing the war, having hired about 20,000 so-called contractors, mercenaries, to do work that used to be done by the military.

A member of the new private army in Iraq may make as much as 10 times more than what an enlisted soldier makes, and private companies making billions from the Iraq war will no doubt be quick to make political contributions to make sure the war keeps

going. Our Reservist and National Guard units are fortifying a mission to which they should have never been called.

Iraq has turned into a tragedy. What is even more tragic is the thinking that says, Well, we are there; now we need to stay and finish the job.

Mr. Speaker, we need to get out. The sooner the better. And we need to hold accountable those whose lies sent our soldiers there at the cost of many American lives and the lives of innocent Iraqis.

RECOGNIZING THE WOMEN OF TOMORROW MENTOR AND SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize an outstanding group from my congressional district, south Florida, the Women of Tomorrow Mentor and Scholarship Program: its founder, Jennifer Valoppi; its sponsor, NBC Channel 6; and, of course, their board of directors, Don Browne, Katherine Fernandez-Rundle, Donna Feldman, Judge Judy Kreeger, Marita Srebnick, and Sherry Williams, for their steadfast commitment to the women of our south Florida community.

Women of Tomorrow is a mentor and scholarship program designed to guide, to inspire, and to help at-risk young women achieve their true potential through education, job training, resume-building, and skill development.

We as a society have a profound obligation to enrich the lives of all of our citizens, and Women of Tomorrow fulfills that obligation by encouraging young women to achieve their dreams and embrace their true dignity.

I am proud of all of those who are associated with Women of Tomorrow for their continuing efforts to improving the lives of south Florida's youth.

ADDRESSING GANG VIOLENCE

(Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak about the increasing problem of gang violence.

Since 2001, we have seen drastic budget cuts in youth violence prevention. At-risk kids need support and a place to go after school. They need the fundamental tools to make good choices.

Instead of funding these programs, the Congress has chosen to lock them up and throw away the key.

Mr. Speaker, what kind of message is this, and the bill that we are going to take up this week, giving to our at-risk youth? We must provide at-risk youth with a path to succeed, not a path to prison.